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ABSTRACT

The two parts of this report to the Kansas State Board of Education discuss the need for early childhood education, and the feasibility of early childhood education in the public schools. Data suggest a need for preschool education, especially for vulnerable children who cannot otherwise receive the benefits of education when they reach the age of 5 years. However, approximately two-thirds of Kansas respondents answered "no" when asked "Should the public school in your community be responsible for providing preschool education for 3- and 4-year-olds?" In the absence of a public mandate for the public schools to become the agency for preschool education, there must be other overriding reasons to consider such a change in policy. Such reasons include the fact that the family has changed in ways impacting negatively on the development of preschool-age children. Many children are at risk but do not meet the criteria of "exceptional" and therefore cannot be served since funding is restricted to identified handicapped children. Based on the conclusion that Kansas should implement early childhood education in the public schools, the report includes 10 recommendations for implementation. (RH)

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NEED AND FEASIBILITY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A Report to Kansas State Board of Education

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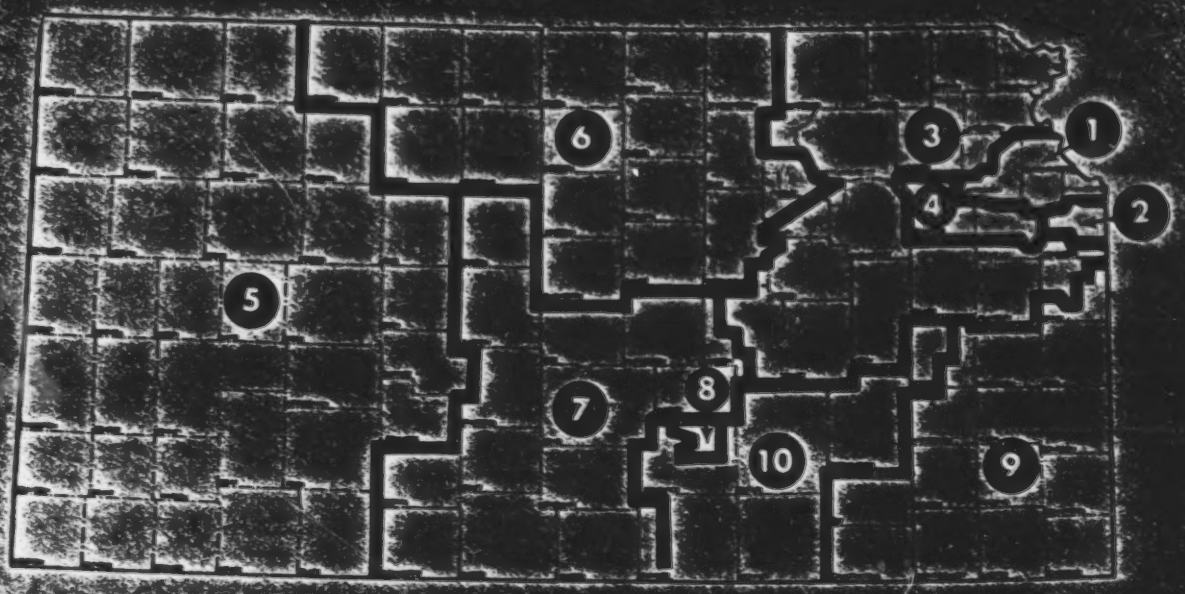

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A REPORT TO THE KANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ON NEED AND FEASIBILITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Prepared by

Special Education Administration
State and Federal Programs
Kansas State Department of Education

in response to a
Development Goal of the
Kansas State Board of Education

THE NEED AND FEASIBILITY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FOREWORD

One of the goals of the State Board of Education for the 1986 fiscal year was to identify the learning needs of populations not currently being served by schools and assess the feasibility of extended programs in local communities.

Specifically the State Board requested an assessment of the need for and the feasibility of early childhood education programs in the public schools which can enrich, extend and equalize the educational opportunities and achievement for all students.

A committee was appointed to study the issues and this report presents the findings of the committee. Members of the committee were:

Warren Bell, Director of Federal Programs
Suzanne Grant, Coordinator of the Handicapped Children's Early Education State Plan Grant
Ann Harrison, Ph.D., Director of Program Planning and Evaluation
Elaine McCullough, student, Emporia State University
Carol Marshall, Ed.D., Emporia State University
Lucile Paden, Ph.D., Specialist in Early Childhood Education
Janet Reznicek, student, Emporia State University
Juan Rocha, Specialist in Migrant and Bilingual Education
Shirley Scott, Coordinator of the Migrant Preschool Project

The committee is appreciative of the assistance provided by many colleagues in the preparation of this report. Special thanks are due the Bureau of Health and Vital Statistics in the Department of Health and Environment, the public and private schools who provided data on their programs and the Professional Development Committee of the Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children who were consulted during the preparation and read the draft before publication.

Lucile Paden, Chairperson of the Study Committee

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Development in the early years is an interactive process between the child's biological heritage as manifested during maturation and the environment in which the development takes place. Both of these factors must be considered to understand the past, current and future status of an individual child.

Learning occurs in the context of this interactive process and is influenced by it. For this reason, intervention into the process can profoundly influence the outcome of the development of a child. The learning base which has occurred at any age level will set the limits to learning that can be achieved at subsequent levels.

The nature of learning during the early years differs from learning during the traditional school years in many ways. Early development follows a coherent sequence which determines the level of skills a child can bring to bear on the learning process. The level of abstraction that can be achieved; the social, motor, perceptual and cognitive skills, the length of time that learning new material can be sustained at one session and the degree of discrepancy that can be bridged in generalization of a concept or skill all differ in both degree and quality from the early years to the years of academic learning.

From the above it follows that educational programs for the early years of birth through four years must reflect the coherent sequence and, to be developmentally appropriate, will abound in concrete experiential opportunities to learn, while employing pictorial and other primitive levels of abstraction. In this way, the curriculum will support the development of the early concepts that underlie mathematics, reading and writing. Play contributes an essential element to preschool learning in that it provides opportunities for practicing newly acquired skills and for developing new social skills. The curriculum is clearly not a scaled down model of the academic curriculum.

The role of the family in the learning achieved by young children cannot be ignored. Quality educational programs for young children must sychronize the family values and teachings with the goals of the educational program. The coping skills of the family as well as the skill and abilities of the child must be taken into account.

A society which espouses equal educational opportunity for all children must consider the learning opportunities which children encounter during the preschool years. Every young child should have access to an appropriate educational experience, but children differ widely in their ability to benefit from any learning environment, and learning environments differ in the support to development which they provide to the child. Children who live in poverty, whose families move frequently, or who have a handicapping condition are vulnerable to problems in learning. Because of the changing character of the family, some of the opportunities that children had in the past have been lost to present day children. Families are smaller, frequently having only one child, and parents are more likely to be in the workforce than previously. The need for society to assume some of the responsibility for preschool education must be re-evaluated in the light of these factors.

INTRODUCTION

Not everyone believes that three- and four-year-old children need preschool education. And not all those who think young children need preschool educational experiences believe that the public schools should be the agency to provide the experience.

In the 17th annual Gallup Poll, 1985, Americans were asked if they favored a program for tax-supported child care centers for all preschool children as a part of the public school system. The results showed that, as a nation, 43% of the respondents were in favor and 45% were opposed. With the public apparently evenly divided on the subject, there is no clear direction to policy makers except to note that the trend has been in the direction of more rather than less approval of preschool programs in the public school. The dramatic increase in enrollment in preschool programs, documented by state and federal data, seems to contradict the results of the poll. Various interest groups and organizations have become actively involved in studying the issue for further consideration. *Education Week*, on October 16, 1985, listed some of the major studies of preschool education. Included in the list:

> The National Association of Elementary School Principals has launched an initiative in preschool education that will include a national survey of state standards for preschool education.
>
> The Bank Street College of Education and the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women will conduct a 30-month study of the involvement of public schools in the creation of early childhood programs from practical and policy angles.
>
> The National Conference of State Legislatures has begun a two-year technical assistance program on early childhood education and child care through which the group will provide information on early childhood programs to four or five selected states.
>
> The National Association for the Education of Young Children is studying the implications of universal education of four-year-olds in public schools.

The developments which have precipitated the current interest have been shifts in demographic factors, numerous research findings, and reports of a national need for education reforms. From the volumes of material available on these topics, selected findings that bear directly on the need and feasibility of preschool programs in the public schools are presented here. Readers may find more detailed reports in the references listed at the end of this paper.

In the Fourth Public Opinion Poll conducted by the Center for Educational Research and Service, Emporia State University, January 1986, Kansans were asked "Should the public schools in your community be responsible for providing preschool education for three- and four-year-olds?" Overall, only 28% answered "yes" and 66% answered "no," with 6% either not answering or giving a "don't know" response. This is hardly a mandate to the public schools of Kansas to open their doors to preschool children. However, non-high school graduates, respondents under age 24, and those with an income under $15,000 registered the least opposition to the notion. These are the respondents most likely to have preschool age children and to need financial aid if their children are to have a preschool educational experience.

Traditions are hard to overcome. In Kansas, preschool education has not typically been considered the province of the public schools. In 1949, a few schools began to include deaf children under statutory school age in classes for the hearing impaired. Shortly thereafter, some schools admitted mentally retarded children to classes in hopes of overcoming some

of the effects of retardation through early education. With the advent of the great national experiment, Head Start, many schools opened their doors, although not their enrollment, to three- and four-year-olds. A few more joined the ranks through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I (now Chapter 1) which permitted eligible attendance centers to open preschools for the purpose of compensating for the educational disadvantage related to poverty. Finally, preschools for handicapped children under age five have increased in numbers steadily since state special education aid funds were authorized for preschool programs and the federal Education of the Handicapped Act has encouraged such programs through federal funds. Beginning with the 1986-87 school year, four-year-old handicapped children may be counted as pupils for the determination of the district's equalization allocation in the state aid to districts formula. This most recent incentive was enacted by the 1986 Legislature.

This report is divided into two sections: 1) The need for early childhood education and 2) the feasibility of early childhood education in the public schools. The recommendations resulting from the study are presented in the conclusion.

PART I

NEED FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

PART I

THE NEED FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Is there a Need for Early Childhood Education?

There is a need for early childhood education if some young children are unable to benefit from the learning experiences that are appropriate for their age peers in kindergarten. There is a need if parents of young children want their children to enjoy the enrichment of early childhood education and opportunities for social interaction with their peers but are unable to afford the cost. One measure of need is the growth in enrollment in early childhood programs. Both national trends and current practice in Kansas show such increases.

National Trends in Early Childhood Education

Enrollment rates in preprimary programs are rising substantially. The national enrollment rates for three- and four-year-olds increased from 21% of the eligible population in 1970 to 38% in 1983. Some of the growth has been attributed to the increase in the numbers of working mothers. Indeed, mothers of young children are entering the work force in increasing numbers. The percentage of married women in the labor force increased from 19% in 1947 to 57% in 1980. It has been projected that by 1990, 80% of children under age six years will have mothers working outside the home.

However, not all of the growth in early childhood programs can be attributed to employment of mothers. The majority of the preschools are private facilities which rely on tuition. Poorer families must rely on scarce public funding to secure preschool services while families who are able to pay may choose to enroll their children in preschool educational programs. Therefore, children in families with higher incomes and college educated parents are more likely to be in early childhood education programs than children from poorer, less educated families. Yet, these are the children who are in the greatest need of educational intervention. (See Table 1.)

Other current concerns are related to the special needs of children. Current birth statistics show an overall increase in the number of preschool age children. Minority children, children of teenage mothers and those from single parent families tend to have more than their share of learning problems. The 1980 census data indicated an increase in the proportion of minority preschool children and more children from teenage mothers and single parent households. The latest statistics indicate that one in three births are to unwed mothers.

Still another concern is for the learning difficulties experienced by at risk or handicapped young children and the effectiveness of early intervention for these children. Research studies, such as the Perry Preschool Project, have consistently indicated that the costs of early intervention will be recovered in later years as children require less intense special education, perform substantially better in school, have lower dropout rates, fewer teen pregnancies, lower crime rates and have greater success in school and employment. (Sweinhart, 1985.)

Findings of a 14-year longitudinal study by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are consistent with the Perry Project findings. "We are now able to show that quality preschool education has a significant long-term impact on intelligence of high-risk children, and that the impact is positive," according to Craig Ramey, the physician who directs the Abecedarian Project. He continues, "When a child is retained in a grade in North Carolina, it costs

approximatley $4,500 for him to repeat that year. You can get a lot of good day care for $4,500." (Bridgman, 1985.)

In summarizing recent research findings, Sharon Lynn Kagan from the Yale University Child Study Center observed that the data have been available for a long time but only now is information getting into the public arena (Kagan, 1985).

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Table 1

NATIONAL PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY FAMILY INCOME AND SCHOOLING

Category	% of 3-year olds Enrolled	% of 4-year olds Enrolled
Family Income		
Under $10,000	19.2	38.5
$10,000 - $19,000	20.9	36.6
$20,000 and Over	40.7	62.8
Schooling of head of household:		
1-3 years of high school	17.9	36.9
4 years of high school	21.0	39.2
1-3 years of college	32.2	54.2
4 years of college	48.1	67.7

- From preprimary enrollment 1980 by M. Chorvinsky, 1982. Washington, D.C., National Center for Education Statistics. Cited in Schweinhardt - Early Childhood Development Programs in the Eighties.

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Pressures for educational reform have focused on early childhood education as a possible means of improving student performance. The National Association of Elementary School Principals has recommended the creation of full-day programs for all four-year-olds. The City of New York has just instituted such an undertaking. The 100,000 four-year-old children of New York City now have an educational opportunity in their public schools.

The National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education holds annual meetings to discuss issues related to early childhood education. They are in the process of preparing a position paper on a comprehensive approach to services for young children and their families. The statements in the draft copy of the NAECS/SDE position paper are consistent in the views and conclusions in this report.

The Status of Public Education for Preschool Children in Kansas - 1986

K.S.A. 72-67,115 (1965) provides that: "The board of education of any unified school district may offer and teach courses and conduct programs for children under the age provided by law for enrollment in kindergarten, to be known as preschool programs." These programs are authorized but are discretionary on the part of the local education agency; that is, they are not required to be provided.

Primarily because of funding resources, preschool programs in the public school have been limited to special education and remedial or compensatory programs such as Head Start or Chapter 1 preschools for the educationally or economically disadvantaged.

Other private and public agencies may provide preschool education and/or day care services with or without the approval the Department of Education. In Kansas, the Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) has historically had the authority to license all away-from-home care, including "preschool education" and day care for children under the statutory school age. However, in 1984, new Department of Health and Environment regulations were adopted which removed the authority to license educational programs if they are conducted in a school providing kindergarten through grades six (K.A.R. 28-4-433(a)(2)). Currently, there is no authority in the state to regulate such private non-accredited preschools unless they receive state or federal funds.

Who Are the Kansas Preschool Children?

Preschool children are the children who are living in the state and who are under age five years on September 1 of the current school year.

There are two ways of estimating the number of preschool children in the state. One is to use the births in the state as a base. This estimate does not take into account the number of children who were born in Kansas but live in or have moved to another state or those who have moved into the state since birth or those who have died since the first year of life. Nonetheless, the number of infants surviving the first year is a reasonable estimation basis for planning. Data available from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the Department of Health and Environment provide data on sex, race, single or multiple births, and county of birth.

Another method of estimating numbers is to use the most recent census data. This method is limited by the fact that the census is completed once in ten years, on the decade, and is updated by sampling and trend projections in between. What is not available in recency of accurate counts is balanced by the other kinds of information available from the census. By selecting information from the two sources, birth statistics and the census, it is possible to draw a useful profile of the preschool population in terms that are relevant to the need for preschool education even though the census and birth statistics are never identical.

Tables 2, 3, and 4 present some of the most recent estimates. A child may be counted in more than one category in these tables.

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Table 2

KANSAS FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS
BASED ON 1980 CENSUS DATA

Number of families with children under age six	
Income below poverty level	13,362
Income below 125% of poverty	19,502
Female head of household	16,876
Female head of household with income below poverty	8,316
Number of children by minority race	
Black	12,567
Spanish origin	8,296

Table 3

ESTIMATES OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD POPULATIONS BASED ON BIRTH STATISTICS 1981-1985

Year	Kansas Live Births	Handicapped (Estimated 5%)	Living in Poverty (Estimated 7.4%)	Below 125% of Poverty (10.8%)
1981	41,202	2,060	3,049	4,450
1982	40,757	2,038	3,016	4,002
1983	40,365	2,018	2,987	4,359
1984	39,954	1,998	2,957	4,315
1985	39,418	1,971	2,917	4,257
Totals	201,696	10,087	14,926	21,383

One third of the children born in 1981 were under age 5 on September 1 of 1986. The estimates for purposes of this projection were based on whole calendar years closest to the age group under consideration. Post neonatal deaths and migration into and out of the state were not considered. The 5% estimation factor for handicapped is the percentage found to closely reflect the number of children identified in areas where services have been available for a number of years, and the 10.8% factor for poverty was derived from the information in the 1980 Kansas census reports.

The best estimates, then, for three- and four-year-old children in September of 1986 are the totals based on 1982 and 1983 births:

Table 4

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF KANSAS PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN 1986

Handicapped	4,056
In Poverty	8,361
All others	68,705
Total	81,122

How are the Children Being Served?

Preschool children in Kansas are receiving group experiences in a variety of programs including child care in the home of a family day care provider, or in private non-profit or proprietary centers, preschools, Head Start, and public school classes for the handicapped, for the disadvantaged, and for migrant children.

For this study, only those programs which have an educational component as an integral part of the program and are free to parents are reported. Where programs target a particular population or have a stated objective, these have been noted.

The table lists the target population, the estimated number of children eligible and needing the service, the number actually receiving the service and the percentage of the need that is being met.

Table 5

3 AND 4 YEAR OLD KANSAS CHILDREN IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Target Population	Enrollment by Program	Total Enrollment	Number of Children Estimated to Need Services	Estimated % of Need Being Met
Disadvantaged		4,113	8,360	49%
Head Start	3,420			
Chapter I	527			
Board of Education	106			
Migrant	60			
Handicapped		1,540	4,056	38%
Public Schools	612			
Kansas State School for the Deaf	6			
Approved/Accredited Special Preschools	396			
Head Start	526			

What Are the Educational Opportunities for Children Under Age Five?

Head Start preschools are funded through the Federal Region VII office of the Department of Human Resources which includes Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and Iowa. The federal funding remains fairly secure. Nine USD's in the state have Head Start programs which are housed in public schools. Head Start, which targets poverty populations, currently provides preschool services for 3,420 children in Kansas. Of this number, 979 are in programs in USD public school buildings, and 526 are handicapped children, (1984 Head Start Statistics).

Funding has not increased sufficiently to provide new programs for all the currently unserved areas of the state. Limited new funds for 1985-86 drew at least 16 applications from Kansas communities for new or expanded Head Start programs which, when added together, would total many times the funds allocated to Kansas.

Chapter 1 federal funds provided preschool services in 1985 for 527 children: 15 in Council Grove, 100 in Hutchinson, and 412 in Wichita. Like Head Start, Chapter 1 targets poverty populations under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Limited Chapter 1 funds are applied to preschool education as preschool is only one of the many options for expenditure of these funds, and attendance centers must meet certain economic guidelines. This application of Chapter 1 funds for preschool programs has been curtailed by changes in priorities related to reduction of funds.

The *Board of Education* in USD 259, Wichita, is unique in Kansas in providing "pre-kindergarten" which is designed to reach children where Head Start and Chapter 1 programs are not available. There are no income guidelines for the 106 children in four schools. Principals identify families from their attendance area who have children that will be attending kindergarten the following year and who would benefit the most from preschool experiences.

Migrant preschool children rank as a third service priority in the *Migrant Education Program* which receives funds from the federal "141 Grant." This funding is generated

only from children ages 5 through 17. Two migrant preschool programs in Liberal served about 60 children in 1985. Migrant preschool children are also included in full-day summer programs with school-age children in ten Kansas communities.

Achievement scores for kindergarten migrant children in Federal Region VII indicate migrant children begin school approximately two years developmentally behind their peers. Project P.R.I.M.E. (Preschool Readiness in Migrant Education) started the operation of more preschool programs in September, 1986, with about 200 additional children to be included in these new programs. The states in Federal Region VII have noted a need "to create or adapt an existing preschool model to the needs specific to migrant children which will guide the four states in providing preschool education." Kansas will be developing this model for Region VII.

Handicapped children ages 3 and 4 receiving special education numbered 1,540 as reported in 1985-86. About one-third of this group were served in Head Start programs. Head Start regulations stipulate that 10 percent of the enrollment be available to handicapped children but Kansas Head Start programs average 17% handicapped. For most of the other handicapped children, service was available through interagency partnerships between local education agencies and community agencies. The rest received special education in public school programs, special purpose schools with preschool programs or developmental special preschools. Funding resources include state categorical and federal special education funds under the Education of the Handicapped Act. State equalization aid to districts is available for four-year-old children.

Summary of the Need for Early Childhood Education in the Public Schools

Kansas children who need early childhood education in order to overcome the effects of poverty and disabilities number, conservatively, 12,400. Of these children, 5,650 or about 46% are in programs that are open to all eligible children and free to their parents. Sixty-two percent of the children who need early education because of disabilities receive help only if their parents can afford to pay for services. Fifty-one percent of the children in poverty receive help only if the family can qualify for day care services. While many of the day care programs are of high quality, the training of staff is variable and the family, not the child, must meet the program guidelines.

It would appear from the above that only with public school sponsorship will early childhood education become available to all children who need it.

PART II

THE FEASIBILITY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

PART II

THE FEASIBILITY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Should the Public Schools Provide Early Childhood Education?

A change in public policy should be the result of public need and public wishes. The change should be in the direction of meeting the need and fulfilling the public desires.

The results of this study clearly suggest a need for preschool education, especially for the vulnerable children who cannot otherwise receive the benefits of education when they reach the age of five. There is a clear, but far from universal tendency for children to receive preschool experience when their parents are able to secure the services for their children on their own initiative.

The Center for Educational Research and Service, Emporia State University, conducted a survey of public opinion about education, (KATE IV, 1986). Among the questions, Kansas respondents were asked, "Should the public schools in your community be responsible for providing preschool education for three- and four-year-olds?" Such a question assumes the respondent has an understanding of current trends and the need and rationale for early intervention. Twenty-eight percent answered "yes" and 66% said "no." It is not clear that Kansas public opinion opposes the public schools assuming the responsibility for providing early childhood education to all children. The apparent opposition may have been an artifact of how the question was asked.

In the absence of a public mandate for the public schools to become the agency for preschool education, there must be other overriding reasons to consider such a change in policy.

For the vulnerable Kansas children -- over 8,000 who live in poverty, an unknown number of migrant children, and those whose cultural differences are a barrier to mainstream education, and 4,000 children with handicaps to learning -- for these vulnerable children, public preschool education is a right. But many other children who do not fit the definition of vulnerable also have a right to the educational benefits offered at public expense. Even now, many children are at risk but do not meet the criteria for "exceptional" and therefore cannot be served because funding is limited to identified handicapped children. Also, gifted preschool children usually are not served because few public schools provide gifted preschool education and they are not permitted to enroll a child under the age of five in kindergarten regardless of the developmental maturity of the child.

The change in the "family" provides another reason for making preschool available to all children. The average family size is now fewer than two children, thus limiting the opportunities for development of social skills in relating to siblings. Nationally, mothers of 60% of the three- and four-year-old children are employed outside the home. This means that while children do not have the opportunity to interact with other children in their own homes, many are already in some away-from-home care arrangement, and are interacting with children there. The social change has already occurred. The question for society is whether the changed society is supporting the developmental needs of children in the earliest years. A related question is whether the public schools are the agency of choice for providing these services.

Recommendation 1:

Public schools should offer preschool education because there is an established need for preschool education for vulnerable and at risk children and a right for all preschool

children to the experiences that are no longer available to them in families because of smaller families and the fact that their mothers work outside the home.

Only the public schools can offer services to all children without the barrier of cost to families and can bring to bear the regulatory controls necessary to maintain and monitor the high quality of education that is required for preschool to have a positive impact.

Is the public school system ready to undertake early childhood education?

Some public schools are already engaged in preschool education. Except for the classes for handicapped children, the preschools are operated without additional regulations and are monitored by the program or programs which provide the funding. That is, Head Start meets Head Start guidelines, Chapter 1 is governed by Chapter 1 requirements and so on. Preschool handicapped education, on the other hand, comes under the same state regulations, program approval and monitoring as other special education programs. Teachers and supporting staff must be appropriately trained and certified. The state has adopted certification requirements for preschool teachers and for early childhood special education teachers. Training is available in many Kansas institutions of higher education for regular early childhood teachers and four state universities offer training for early childhood special education teachers.

The public schools are not entirely ready to provide preschool education except to handicapped children. The state has a model to follow in these special preschools to prepare for the growth of early childhood education. By establishing program regulations, personnel certification standards, approved teacher education programs, technical assistance and inservice to new programs, the expansion of special early childhood education programs has been orderly.

It will become increasingly difficult to impose regulatory procedures if preschools are allowed to expand without such regulations. The Head Start research indicates that not all preschool programs are of equal and high quality. Some minimum standards should be set before preschool programs are expanded.

Recommendation 2:

The Kansas State Department of Education should provide leadership in preparing the public schools to receive three- and four-year-old children into educational programs. This will require establishing program standards, including a review of teacher certification and teacher education determining the procedures for monitoring the programs; including the approval or accreditation of the programs, and, of greatest importance, technical assistance to the schools as they begin to implement early childhood education programs.

Where should early childhood programs be located?

The belief that education has to take place within certain walls no longer limits the options of the public schools. Already there are numerous examples of beneficial learning environments outside the public school attendance centers such as vocational training and on-the-job business training. Preschools for young handicapped children already exemplify a wide variety of physical settings. Some are located in regular elementary buildings, some are in specially designed classrooms, some are in the community centers for developmentally disabled, and still others are in low rent space in the business or residential community.

The exact location has not seemed to matter as much as the creativity of the planners in adapting space to the needs of small (because of age) and special (because of disability)

learners. Ideally, all preschools might occupy classrooms built especially for them, but this does not seem to be the critical factor in successful intervention or enrichment.

Head Start and private sector preschools have followed this same varied pattern of locations. Many preschools have been located in a community church building. This option would not be recommended for public schools at this time unless there is a reversal of the decision of the Supreme Court regarding providing services to students in parochial schools. It is not clear how this would apply to other than the Chapter 1 programs cited in the decision, but other options in a community should be pursued first.

It is critical to have the preschool located where transportation and isolation from the rest of the education community and other supporting resources offered by the community is not a problem. For example, children should not have to be bussed great distances to the preschool.

Recommendation 3:

The physical location of the public school preschool should be a local decision. Both the patrons and school administrators should have a role in selecting the most suitable space available in the community. This may be in the school attendance center but need not be. In some cases, an existing preschool or day care center may be available to the district. Specifications would need to be drawn beforehand so as to avoid conflict of interest issues and to direct the decision in the best interests of the children. Local interagency planning should be encouraged.

What regulatory changes would have to be made?

Federal legislation, P.L. 99-457, includes children ages three, four and five under early education programs. Current Kansas teacher certification permits endorsement at levels pre-kindergarten (EC) or kindergarten through grade nine (K-9). For a teacher to teach early childhood special education for ages three through five, endorsements for both levels would be required.

S.B.R. 91-33-3(b)(2) prohibits the accreditation of special purpose schools which serve only preschool aged children. Such schools are approved as developmental special preschools, but the ability of the State Board to collect data on children served and teachers employed is limited to those schools with accreditation.

K.S.A. 72-7033, as amended in 1986, defines "pupil" to include children who are four years old and who are regularly attending special education services. Schools have the authority to provide preschool education for other ages, but the children may not be included in the pupil count of the district in the formula for determining state aid to districts or local budget authority. State special education aid is available to local education agencies which have special education programs.

Recommendation 4:

Define early childhood education to include children ages three through five by September 1.

Recommendation 5:

Add an endorsement level for Early Childhood which spans ages birth through five.

Recommendation 6:

Study accreditation of private schools which provide early childhood education services.

Recommendation 7:

Include three year old children who are attending special education in the pupil count of districts by 1988, and include three and four year old children who are eligible for programs for educationally disadvantaged children by 1990.

What will be the cost of early childhood education?

Costs for providing early childhood education will vary according to the intensity of intervention required by the population served. Enrichment or "regular programs" are less costly than intervention for education disadvantage (poverty) or special education for the handicapped. Table 6 indicates the estimated costs according to the type of early education needed.

Table 6

ESTIMATED COSTS OF PROVIDING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TO THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN

Type of Service	Estimated Cost/Child	Estimated Number of Children	Projected Total Cost
Special Education	$3,816	4,056	$15,477,696
Poverty Intervention	2,339	8,361	19,566,379
Subtotal for Intervention			35,044,075
Regular Early Childhood Educ.	1,407	68,705	96,667,935
TOTAL		81,122	$131,712,010

Sources for the estimated costs are the Cost Benefits of Preschool Handicapped Services, February 1986 and the Projected Head Start Statistical Sheet, 1986.

Some of the costs noted in Table 6 are borne presently by federal programs, state special education and equalization aid funds, local mill levy and private donations.

Currently 1,540 children with handicapping conditions and 4,113 children whose families are living at or near poverty level are receiving early childhood education at an estimated total cost of nearly 15.5 million dollars.

Table 7

ESTIMATED PRESENT EXPENDITURES FOR PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

	Cost/Child	Number of Children	Estimate Current Cost
Special Education	$3,816	1,540	$ 5,876,640
Poverty Intervention	$2,339	4,113	$ 9,620,307
			$15,496,947

The total cost (federal, state and local) for intervention for all children in need would be about $35,000,000.

Recommendation 8:

Children with the greatest need for early childhood education should be served first, adding programs for all children later. Children with handicapping conditions should have first priority, followed by disadvantaged children.

Recommendation 9:

All children eligible for enrollment in public school programs should be counted as pupils for state equalization aid. As early childhood education programs are expanded, state appropriations should be increased for special education and equalization aid to school districts in proportion to the number of new children being served.

Recommendation 10:

Not all children in need could be served immediately. A phase-in period would be necessary in order to establish new programs, train teachers and locate the children eligible for early intervention. Early childhood education is already established. Expansion should be encouraged by integrating services for children with disabilities and disadvantaged children and through partnerships between the public schools and existing community programs.

CONCLUSION

A Summary of Recommendations

1. Public schools should offer early childhood education because there is an established need for preschool education for vulnerable and at risk children and a right for all preschool children to the experiences that are no longer available to them in families because of smaller families and the fact that their mothers work outside the home.

   Only the public schools can offer services to all children without the barrier of cost to families and can bring to bear the regulatory controls necessary to maintain and monitor the high quality of education that is required for preschool to have a positive impact.

2. The Kansas State Department of Education should provide leadership in preparing the public schools to receive three- and four-year-old children into educational programs. This will require establishing program standards, including a review of teacher certification and teacher education; determining the procedures for monitoring the programs, including the approval or accreditation of the programs; and, of greatest importance, technical assistance to the schools as they begin to implement early childhood education programs.

3. The physical location of the public school preschool should be a local decision. Both the patrons and school administrators should have a role in selecting the most suitable space available in the community. This may be in the school attendance center but need not be. In some cases, an existing preschool or day care center may be available to the district. Specifications would need to be drawn beforehand so as to avoid conflict of interest issues and to direct the decision in the best interests of the children. Local interagency planning should be encouraged.

4. Define early childhood education to include ages three through five by September 1.

5. Add an endorsement level for Early Childhood which spans ages birth through five.

6. Study accreditation of private schools which provide early childhood education services.

7. Include three year old children who are attending special education in the pupil count of districts by 1988, and include three and four year old children who are eligible for programs for educationally disadvantaged children by 1990.

8. Children with the greatest need for early childhood education should be served first, adding programs for all children later. Children with handicapping conditions should have first priority, followed by disadvantaged children.

9. All children eligible for enrollment in public school programs should be counted as pupils for state equalization aid. As early childhood education programs are expanded, state appropriations should be increased for special education and equalization aid to school districts in proportion to the number of new children being served.

10. Not all children in need could be served immediately. A phase-in period would be necessary in order to establish new programs, train teachers and locate the children eligible for early intervention. Early childhood education is already established. Expansion should be encouraged by integrating services for children with disabilities and disadvantaged children and through partnerships between the public schools and existing community programs.

AFTERWORD

In recognition of the multiple needs of handicapped children, Governor John Carlin appointed a Cabinet Subcommittee on Early Childhood Developmental Services in 1984. On October 2, 1985, the Subcommittee adopted a state plan for comprehensive services for preschool handicapped children, which was endorsed by Governor Carlin and was adopted by the State Board of Education in January, 1986. The guiding principle for development of this plan was that comprehensive developmental services should be accessible and available to all Kansas families with preschool children with handicapping conditions.

The 1986 Legislature established a permanent Coordinating Council on Early Childhood Developmental Services. Chairman Robert Clemons of the State Board of Education appointed Board member Sheila Frahm to represent the state education agency on the council.

The history and accomplishments of this planning council have been reviewed elsewhere. Young children with disabilities and their families are now benefitting from their efforts. Planners for early childhood education for all children can profit from the experiences of this group.

The Carnegie Foundation is sponsoring an early childhood education project through the National Association of State Boards of Education. The director of the project will provide assistance to state boards of education as they plan for early childhood education.

This is a period of close budgeting; but with careful planning now, the Kansas State Department of Education can continue the expansion of early childhood education that is already under way and can be ready for full implementation of each phase as the time arrives.

P.L. 99-457, 1986 Amendment to the Education of the Handicapped Act, requires states to have available by 1990 special education and related services for three-, four-, and five-year-old children in order to be eligible for federal special education funds for such children. Special grants to assist in implementing programs will be made to participating states.

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Approved 5/14/86

GOALS FOR FY 1987 KANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The following improvement and development goals are adopted from the *Five-Year Plan 1985-1990:*

The State Board and Department of Education will endeavor —

IMPROVEMENT GOALS

A 1.0 — To develop, strengthen, and extend state systems which support excellence in the curriculum and instruction programs of local education agencies

A 2.0 — To develop, strengthen, and extend excellence in vocational and career education programs and improve transitions within and among education and training systems and institutions

A 3.0 — To support and extend excellence in the preservice and inservice training of educational personnel

A 4.0 — To provide leadership in the use of information technologies for improving and extending educational programs

A 5.0 — To continue efforts to overcome barriers which limit the educational development of special populations not currently achieving their potential

A 6.0 — To work with school districts, state institutions, parents, and other citizens in extending support and financing for Kansas schools

DEVELOPMENT GOALS

B 1.0 — To identify the learning needs of populations not currently being served by schools and assess the feasibility of extended programs in local communities

B 2.0 — To improve and extend support for vocational and career education programs

B 3.0 — To conduct a study for developing a performance-based measure for the evaluation of teacher/administrator training programs and certification

B 4.0 — To demonstrate the use of information technologies by extending opportunities for networking and developing alternative learning systems

B 5.0 — To develop affirmative programs for overcoming past barriers for equal opportunity on the basis of race, sex, national origin, geographic location, age, socioeconomic status, or handicapping condition

B 6.0 — To identify methods of increasing resources for local schools and education programs

The following traditional goals were developed for FY 1987 to maintain the seven major functions of the State Board and Department of Education:

TRADITIONAL FUNCTION GOALS

Approval

C 1 — To promote quality education through program approval of teacher and administrator preparation programs and certification and accreditation procedures which reflect the needs of educators, school districts, and students

Regulation

C 2 — To set and require state guidelines, rules and regulations, and plans to achieve balance between constitutional and legislative intent and local policies, priorities, and procedures

Research and Service

C 3 — To provide services through the State Department of Education to local education agencies in the area of technical assistance, information, and resources

Evaluation

C 4 — To assess the progress of the educational system in Kansas

Leadership

C 5 — To provide leadership in identifying needs, priorities, and goals

Finance

C 6 — To support equitable finance plans that allow local education agencies to meet present and future educational needs

Organization

C 7 — To provide an organizational structure to ensure all students the opportunity to an equitable education